

Speech of Prof. Mouïh Hamzé
Secretary General of the CNRS-L
ERANETMED Funding Agencies Meeting (Third Call)
CNRS-L; Beirut, Lebanon (February 15, 2017)

**Dr. Cosimo Lacirignola, Secretary General of CIHEAM
Coordinator & Partners of ERANETMED**

Allow me to first welcome you in Beirut and at the National Council for Scientific Research – Lebanon (CNRS-L) and express our deep appreciation for your kind participation at this ERANETMED Funding Agencies Meeting (Third ERANETMED Call) for coordination of research activities between Mediterranean Partner Countries and EU Member States; and of course under the efficient coordination of CIHEAM and IAM-Bari.

I would like to take a moment to reflect briefly on the First & Second Joint ERANETMED Calls to highlight and compliment the strong sense of co-ownership, mutual benefit and shared interest that the Calls have exhibited in addressing common challenges, harvesting common opportunities and enhancing bi-regional collaborations.

However, experience from these calls also exhibited some limitations: particularly in terms of the number of proposals retained for funding and delays in contract implementation. This third call should build on both the positive and the lessons learned. Building also on the important societal challenges of natural resources, coastal area management, water and water ecosystems, biodiversity and pollution.

We have actively worked together for over 10 years now; and through new opportunities, programmes and projects will continue to refine our collaboration based on new challenges, more resources (human and financial), new priorities and new possibilities.

It is in this framework that we are also happy to be hosting (tomorrow and Friday) two parallel events: the 4PRIMA Stakeholder Meeting on Alignment of Research Programmes and the MEDSPRING Science Café and Awareness Event. We are delighted that many of you will join us to both events as well.

Believing that the MEDSPRING Project has and will continue to enhance collaborative opportunities between our regions, and the 4PRIMA will build on the exceptional experience and best practices of the ERANETMED; paving the way for a long-term - 10 year - collaborative programme.

Finally, I am confident that you will join me in recognizing the continued support and efforts of our ERANETMED colleagues, particularly ERANETMED Project Coordinator, Mr. Claudio Bogliotti and his team and the efforts of the CNRS-L organizing team for this event (Ms. Rula Atweh & Ms. Tracy Hindi).

I take this opportunity to welcome all of you again, wish you a pleasant stay in Beirut and wish us all active and successful discussions towards the Third ERANETMED Call.

Thank you.